

The Power of Human Connections

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NEWS CENTRAL

Monthly newsletter from Central Electric Membership Corp.

Coal ash compliance costs to begin Jan. 1

For the past several months, N.C. electric cooperatives have been discussing the future impact of coal ash compliance on our members. The future has now arrived and compliance costs will begin affecting our wholesale power costs starting Jan. 1.

As you already know, government mandates aimed at regulating the disposal of coal ash

introduced more stringent disposal requirements for coal ash basins. In recent years, the push for more renewable forms of generation, as well as regulation on the coal industry, has shifted the generation portfolio away from coal. While the cooperative does not directly own any coal-fired generation facilities, our members have benefited from the affordable and reliable coal-fired production of electricity through our purchased power agreements.



For decades, coal-fired generation facilities produced affordable and reliable electricity for consumers. Now, utilities and consumers are having to bear the costs of closing down these facilities and disposing of coal combustion residuals due to government regulations.

Since the cooperative is not-for-profit, any costs incurred by the co-op must ultimately be passed on to the membership. Central's share of the coal ash compliance costs being handed down to each of N.C.'s electric cooperatives is approximately \$6.9 million over the next 10 years. That's why beginning with billing statements issued after Jan. 1, 2018, all members will see a new Environmental Compliance

Surcharge of \$4.85 per month, per account. This charge is necessary to cover compliance costs being handed down.

While increases are never pleasant, rest assured the cooperative has exhausted all available avenues to lower the cost to our members as much as possible. We will continue seeking ways to keep electric bills affordable, controlling costs through innovation, and putting *you*, the member-owner, first.



The CEMC office will be closed Monday, Dec. 25, and Tuesday, Dec. 26, for the Christmas holiday. Crews will be on-call. Your friends and neighbors at Central Electric wish you a safe and happy holiday season.

POINT OF VIEW

Keeping electricity affordable

From the desk of CEO & General Manager Morris McClellion

As your friends and neighbors at your local electric cooperative, we never want to bring you news that your electric costs are going up. We enjoy bringing you much more pleasant news, such as wholesale power cost credits in December, January and February of 2016 and 2017, or capital credit returns each of the last nine years. However, we must sometimes bring news that is not so pleasant, as is the Environment Compliance Surcharge beginning Jan. 1.

We are very aware of the fact that electricity is a necessity in our modern world. We depend on it to

power our daily lives and keep us connected to the world. It is essentially a foundation of our modern existence and few corners of our lives are left untouched by electricity.

That is why we work hard to keep your electricity bills affordable. Controlling costs, applying innovative ways to control system load, and providing tools and information to help you become more energy efficient are just a few ways we keep affordability as a top priority.

When you receive your January billing statement, take a moment



to compare the value we receive from our electric bills in comparison to the cost of other consumer items we frequently purchase.

For example, how much did your iPhone cost? Did you know that you can fully charge your iPhone more than 18 times for a penny? You can charge it once every day of the year for about 20 cents total. To take it a step further, at today's cost the average consumer can actually power their entire home for several months at the same cost of an iPhone. Take a moment to let that sink in.

In an ideal world, expenses would never go up. However, the reality is that costs sometimes change, whether it is within our control or not. Despite small changes along the way, we are committed to keeping your electricity bill affordable and helping you continue to enjoy all of the different uses of electricity at a very competitive cost.

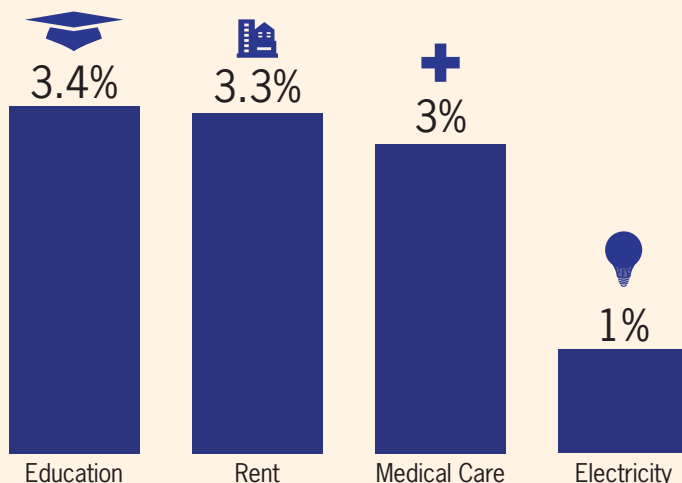
Until next time,

Morris McClellion

ELECTRICITY REMAINS A GOOD VALUE

The cost of powering your home rises at a slower pace than many of your typical expenses. Compare the average price increase of these expenses each year over the last five years, and the value of electricity shines.

Average Annual Price Increase 2011-2016



Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index

Education grants boost teachers and students

Central Electric is continually looking for ways to support the communities we serve. One way is by annually awarding Bright Ideas grants to local educators. The program helps support engaging and innovative classroom projects.

This year, the co-op awarded \$15,000 to 12 educators, who were selected by an independent panel of judges. Over 3,800 students in our communities will be positively impacted as a result.

Since 1994, North Carolina's electric cooperatives have awarded more than \$10.9 million to educators across the state. The Bright Ideas program has reached over 2.1 million N.C. students and sponsored more than 10,400 projects in all subjects, including math, reading, science, technology, history, music and the arts.

The application process for Bright Ideas grants will reopen for interested educators in April 2018. For more information on Bright Ideas grants, visit CEMCPower.com or NCBrightIdeas.com.

Congratulations to the following 2017 Bright Ideas grant recipients:

▶ Nancy Beck, Sandhills-Farm Life Elementary



Dennis Regan accepts a Bright Ideas check with his students on behalf of Southern Lee High School. The grant will allow Regan to introduce students to solar power through the design, installation and operation of a roof-top solar system.

- ▶ Rebecca Clemens, Silk Hope School
- ▶ Kimberly Hilliard, Sandhills-Farm Life Elementary
- ▶ Dr. Susan Jinks, New Century Middle School
- ▶ Deanna LaLonde, J. Glenn Edwards Elementary
- ▶ Beryl Lemmons, Horton Middle School
- ▶ Kimberly Oakley, New Century Middle School
- ▶ Dennis Regan, Southern Lee High School
- ▶ Diana Rowland, Sandhills Theater Arts Renaissance School
- ▶ Patricia Steingraber, Sandhills-Farm Life Elementary
- ▶ Skyla Stuckey, Crain's Creek Middle School
- ▶ Gwendolyn Williams, Southern Lee High School.



Take control with FlexPay

Are you looking for ways to manage your energy costs? We may have the answer for you. The co-op's FlexPay program gives you the power to manage your payments and closely monitor your energy use.

FlexPay allows you to pay on your account as necessary to maintain a credit balance based on your daily energy charges. If your account balance runs out, there are no reconnect charges. You only need to establish a \$20 credit account balance to reconnect.

You can monitor your account on CEMCPower.com, as well as through email, text and voice alerts. FlexPay is available to both new and existing residential consumers.

To learn more about the FlexPay program or to see about transferring an existing account onto FlexPay, contact us today.



'Say Yes' to the Youth Tour

Central Electric is seeking applications from high school students willing to participate in the leadership opportunity of a lifetime: The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. Step out of your comfort zone, and join North Carolina's future leaders as they explore the nation's capital.

The Youth Tour allows students to experience Washington, D.C., and learn more about how they can make a difference as young adults. Tourists will visit the Washington Monument, pay their respects at Arlington National Cemetery, meet elected officials and tour Smithsonian museums, all while building connections with peers and future leaders from across the nation.

The cooperative will sponsor two local students to join the June 9-15, 2018 Youth Tour. The all-expense-paid, weeklong Tour is hosted by electric cooperatives nationwide and is a tradition more than 50 years strong. About 1,800 students from more than 40 states are expected to participate in 2018, and North Carolina's electric cooperatives will send a delegation of nearly 45 students.

Students who will be entering their junior or senior year in fall 2018 are eligible to attend and are encouraged to apply. Applications are due by Jan. 26. Visit CEMCPower.com to download the application or to find out more information on this incredible opportunity.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

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CEO & General Manager

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James Taylor, *Editor*

This institution is an equal
opportunity provider and employer.

Water heater maintenance

As a Central Electric member, you have access to a selection of great programs to help you save money over time, including the water heater maintenance program.

The water heater maintenance program is like having a plumber standing by 24-hours a day, seven days a week, for just \$1 each month. This small fee included on your bill will cover the heating element, pop-off valve and thermostats on your water heater, regardless of where you



purchased it, or how old it is.

Furthermore, after you've been enrolled for at least 90 days, if the cooperative's licensed plumber determines the element, pop-off valve or thermostat is the problem, a \$50 credit will be

added to your next bill. If they determine the water heater needs to be replaced, a \$100 credit will be added if you purchase a new water heater with an energy factor of 95 or higher. Contact the office today to take advantage of this program.